

IN THE ABSTRACT:

The Abstract as amended below with a replacement Abstract shows added text with underlining and deleted text with ~~strikethrough~~.

Please DELETE the Abstract in its entirety and substitute the attached new Abstract.

~~An object of the invention is to provide~~An optical device includes a small and low-cost variable polarization plane rotator that can control a rotation angle of the polarization plane easily, ~~and an optical device using the same. To this end, a~~ A variable polarization plane rotator ~~according to the present invention~~ is provided with a $\lambda/4$ phase plate having an optical axis in the same direction as, or at a 90 degree angle relative to, a polarization direction of an input light beam, ~~to apply a 90 degree phase difference between polarization components parallel to and perpendicular to the optical axis thereof. a~~ A phase difference variable element ~~having~~ has an optical axis at a ± 45 degree angle relative to the optical axis of the $\lambda/4$ phase plate, to apply a variable phase difference between the polarization components parallel to and perpendicular to the optical axis thereof, ~~and a~~ A phase difference adjustment section ~~that~~ adjusts the variable phase difference of the phase difference variable element, wherein the input light beam after being transmitted through the phase difference variable element to ~~be into~~ form elliptically polarized light or circularly polarized light, is transmitted through the $\lambda/4$ phase plate to ~~be into~~ form linearly polarized light ~~to thereby rotate the~~ The polarization plane of the input light beam is rotated by an angle corresponding to the phase difference applied by the phase difference variable element.